

R E M A R K S

This is in response to the Office Action that was mailed on September 17, 2004. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 8, 10, and 11 are allowable in substance. The recitation of claim 8 is incorporated into claim 1. A minor formal amendment is made to claim 11. New claim 12 corresponds to former claim 1, amended to incorporate the recitation of claim 10. New claims 13-21 are based upon claims 2-9 and 11, respectively. Claims 5-8 are cancelled, without prejudice to their reassertion in this or a continuing application. No new matter is introduced by this Amendment. With this Amendment, claims 1-4 and 9-21 are pending in the application.

Claims 8 and 11 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112 as failing to define the invention properly. Applicants are grateful to the Examiner for indicating how the issues raised in this connection could be obviated. The claims in their present form adopt the suggestions of the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully urged that the claims in their present form satisfy the requirements of the statute.

Claims 1-4 and were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 1257031 (Nitto). Claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nitto in view of US 5,189,916 (Mizumoto). Claims 5 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nitto in view of GB 1,250,503 (Clabburn). Claims 1-4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US 4,800,100 (Washizu). Claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Washizu in view of Mizumoto. Claims 5 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Washizu in view of Clabburn. None of these rejections applies to the claims presently before the Examiner. Specifically, claims 1-4 and 9-11 correspond to former claim 8, which was indicated by the Examiner to be allowable. Similarly, claims 12-21 correspond to claim 10, also indicated by the Examiner to be allowable, as it was formerly constituted. Accordingly, all of the prior art rejections of record are obviated by this Amendment.

Conclusion

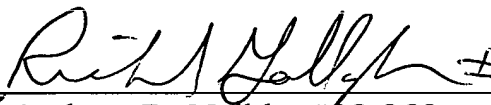
This "Amendment under 37 CFR 1.111" constitutes a full and complete response to the issues raised in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections of record and to pass this application to Issue.

In the event there are any questions concerning in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Richard Gallagher, Registration No. 28,781, at (703) 205-8008.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 CFR §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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ADM/RG/jmb

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